



Bayside Trailable Yacht Club NEWSLETTER

May 2024

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COMMODORE'S CORNER

By Joan Rockliff



Hello Baysiders,

As the sailing season of 2023-2024 has now completed its final cruise, I reflect on what a busy year it has been. I feel the biggest change that came upon the club was the membership resignation of Ed Flynn. Ed has been a tireless worker since joining the club more than 20 years ago. With the club facing windup, he volunteered to become BTYC Commodore in 2014 when nobody else wanted the job and continued this role for 7 years.

During his time in the club Ed developed the website of BTYC. Due to his resignation Ed has transferred the Website into BTYC ownership. Jim Reynolds has agreed to manage the Website; it is in very good hands going into the future with Jim.

We have had a mixed bag when it comes to the cruises this season. With bad weather, ill health, and general lack of interest some cruises never got off the ground. We have many members, but it is mostly a small core group who participate in the cruises. As much thought and effort is expended on organising events, I hope this pattern will change in the next season and the club sees greater participation.

Over the years the Murray River has proven our premier cruise destination, attracting the most participants. This year Kenton and Anne Lillecrapp planned and lead the cruise from Berri to Blanchetown S.A. in magnificent style. It was a wonderful cruise. To

plan a trip like this takes many hours and to keep all the "duckies all in a row" takes leadership. I thank Kenton and Anne for doing this job to perfection.

Don't forget to leave Sunday 15th of September free to attend the BTYC 40th Anniversary celebration lunch. Yes, 40 years since inauguration of the Club! The celebration will be held at Hastings Yacht Club and more details will follow. Hope to see you all there.

A last little reminder. The AGM will be coming up in the Spring. This is the time we vote in the new Committee members to drive the club forward. I will not be standing for Commodore but there are many potential Commodores within our members. Please put some thought into doing this job for 12 months. It can be a very rewarding experience and I know the next Committee will continue to do a great job for BTYC with all the member's support.

Happy Sailing everyone

BTYC COLE TROPHY and LIFE MEMBERSHIP AWARDS

Our club is fortunate to have so many members who have special skills and volunteer these skills for our collective benefit. The Cole trophy for 2023 was awarded to Jim Reynolds for tireless effort in upgrading and integrating our club website and mailing list. The award was presented to Jim at the 2023 AGM which was held at the Mordialloc Hotel late last year.



Commodore Joan also used this opportunity to present Peter Nyga with honorary life membership of our club. Peter was a founding member of the club and has completed over 110 club sails. He has recently decided to retire from sailing and has parted company with Playmate to a new and very lucky boat owner.



THE LEGACY OF A PAST COMMODORE

By Tony Pitt

Seven years is a long period in the commodores cockpit, and prior to that Edwin Flynn had also been an active committee member including an earlier stint as club secretary. His legacy to the club is considerable and I have compiled a list of some of the things that Edwin has personally achieved or been deeply involved with during his time as part of the Club Committee:

- Persuaded BTYC to take out a Public Liability Insurance to protect itself and its committee.
- Reviewed the club's first constitution to modernise it and bring it in line with the relevant legislation (this was prior to the legislation change in 2012 that was later managed by Kenton Lillecrapp).

- Organized Postal Ballots of all members to bring about constitutional changes as required under the constitution in force at that time
- Updated the newsletter to its present format so that the club's activities may be recorded for everyone to enjoy. At the time he was cautioned by a former commodore to be careful not to do such a good job because then no one else will want to take it on.
- Initiated the BTYC web site in 2010 to showcase the club and its activities to potential new members.
- Promoted the club on various internet forums, seeking and obtaining links back to the club website from sailing forums.
- Led a national move to seek the inclusion of Trailer Sailors as Caravans whilst travelling on the Spirit of Tasmania, and thus benefit from Federal subsidies for the transit across Bass Strait. This received support from yacht clubs throughout the country, but unfortunately was not successful.
- Together with others, lobbied for changes to the Australian Standards for the design of Boat Ramps and their associated car parks and roads leading to the boat ramps.
- Lobbied State and Local Government in relation to the design of the Warmies Boat Ramp and also the Saint Kilda Marina.
- Following a meeting with the architect and the engineers of the Warmies Boat Ramp, last minute changes to the plans were made, whereby all the street lights in the car park and road leading to the boat ramp would not overhang the approaches to the boat ramp. Trees were also to be trimmed so that they do not impede the approach by mast up sailing boats. This meant that TS owners could prepare their boat for launching in the car park, rather than the congested set up area in front of the ramp.
- The Australian Standards for boat ramps and boat ramp car parks were amended as a consequence and the St. Kilda boat ramp complies with the new standards.

- Many of these activities resulted in the club punching way above its weight and for a while it even attracted interstate members.
- Stepped up to take leadership of the club during a period when due to lack of interest to serve on the committee the club was going to be wound down.



Thank you Ed for being such a great part of our club and part of our lives.

CRUISE REPORT AUSTRALIA DAY CRUISE, January 21st to 28th, 2024

By **Kenton Lillecrapp**

Participating Vessels: *Silk Department, Eclipse, Scallywag & Winsome.*

We arrived at Paynesville early afternoon and found Scallywag rigged and launched and already on a pontoon near the yacht club. The wind was strong and getting stronger and by the time we were ready to raise the mast it was southerly blowing 25 to 30 knots. We decided that the prudent decision was to sleep on board in the car park and rig up in the morning. So we had happy hour on board Scallywag and then fish and chips at a table on the lawns.

The next morning we rigged and motored up to the pontoon where we were joined by the Bohlings in

Eclipse. The forecast was for very strong easterlies that evening and all the next day. We sailed across to Ocean Grange where we all found spots on the T of the jetty so that we were facing into the increasing easterly wind. A walk on the beach and then we were all invited for happy hour on board "Diesel Jack" by Mike and Bev with the wind starting to whistle straight down the jetty.

The night was very windy, but for us quite comfortable. The morning was very overcast and still very windy although starting to die down into the afternoon. Another walk where we saw a big kangaroo on the beach and then happy hour on Mangrove Jack "Gemini" with Robert & Lyn. We were also joined by Steve and Vicki Patterson in "Cross Farr".

We had a good sail down to Metung in a nice 15 knot southerly and then the next day sailed across to the Tambo and Johnsonville where we were lucky to get positions on the jetty, except for Cary and Pat Pedicini who arrived after lunch and rafted up on Silk Department. By mid afternoon we had heavy rain with lightning in the distance and then ongoing drizzle. Other boats were arriving looking for spots on the jetty and then moving on to Swan Reach. We had planned to motor up to Swan Reach for dinner at the pub, but in order not to lose our positions we arranged for the pub to pick us up and drop us back again. Lucky we did as the Swan Reach jetty was also packed.

The Australia Day forecast was for WSW gusts of over 30 knots so we raised flags and decided to stay where we were. We had a fine, sunny day but very windy.

Saturday was fine, sunny and with a light but increasing wind. We raised sails at the entrance to the Tambo and then Silk Department and Scallywag had a very exciting and close non-race across to Paynesville. Several very close crossings and Silk Department first past the Fort King mark only a few metres ahead of Scallywag. We had coffee and doughnuts at the Saturday market.

Sunday was fine and sunny but with an increasing south westerly. We were down to two boats so by mid afternoon we decided to motor down to the launch ramp and pull out. An interesting cruise but most of the time more wind than we wanted.

CRUISE REPORT

Westernport Bay

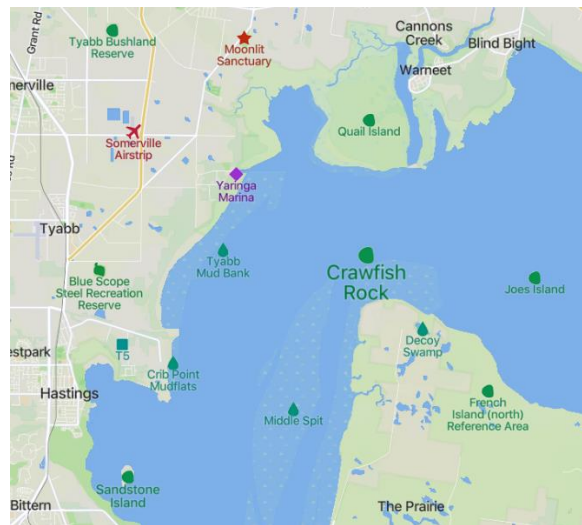
January 9 to 12, 2024

By Kenton Lillecrapp

Participating Vessels: *Take It Easy*, *Silk Department*, *Grasshopper*

This was a substitute cruise. Late last year Gaye Pitt broke her left arm and Tony was consequently in high demand as a short term carer and unable to take the planned cruise into the waters around Port Albert. This cruise replaced the proposed cruise out of Port Albert when he was unable to go.

We launched boats out of the Hastings Yacht Club and set off for Tooradin with a light wind and a forecast southerly of 10-15 knots later in the day. Before long we were in big waves and a 20 knot southerly and on a very exciting broad reach past Crawfish Rock and heading towards the Tooradin Channel. Thrill seekers in *Take it Easy* opted to take the inside channel past Crawfish Rock. *Silk Department* dropped sails at the Charing Cross intersection and motored an hour all the way up the channel to Tooradin where we had a peaceful night on the pontoon.



We left Tooradin about 10.00am on a rising tide and very little wind, timing our crossing of the shallow hump area for high tide. That all went smoothly but once we rounded Spit Point a 20 knot SW wind arrived. *Silk Department* decided on a reef in the main and

bashed away at the heavy wind on tide conditions all the way to Corinella. We all found spots to anchor in amongst the moored boats. Anchoring here was difficult. It took me three attempts in a strong southerly and outgoing tide, first with a dragging anchor and then being too close to other moorings.

Mid morning we motored out of Corinella and around Pelican Island in almost no wind. We were timing our arrival at the San Remo bridge for slack water. After about three hours of motoring *Take It Easy* and *Silk Department* went under the bridge & turned to go onto the San Remo pontoon at almost exactly slack water while *Grasshopper* less than ten minutes after us had to contend with a strong outgoing tide. It just shows how small the window is. Dinner at the Fishermans Coop, but somewhat disappointing.



Once again we timed our departure for slack water and had a good sail towards Rhyll in a 10-12 knot southerly and very overcast sky. *Take It Easy* went in close for a good look at Observation Point and then we rounded the Tortoise Head buoy and made for Hastings in a very light wind and very confused sea.

As soon as we arrived at the club pontoon a steady, spitting drizzle started and stayed with us the whole time we unloaded boats.

Tony has advised that the Port Albert cruise was deferred but not cancelled. It is back on the sailing program for next season. The Westernport adventure was a good substitute but we are looking forward to the lesser known sailing ground that Tony has lined up for us.

CRUISE REPORT FROM BERRI to BLANCHETOWN March 21st to 28th, 2024

By Kenton Lillecrapp

Participating Vessels: *Silk Department, Scallywag, Take It Easy, Sapphire, Spiders Web, Tied UP, Gentleman Jack & Taylor Louise*

The weather in South Australia is generally good at this time of the year and once we had survived the drive to the Riverland in 40 degree heat the next two weeks were perfect. This year's cruise started with launching of boats into the lagoon at Berri and then motoring downstream for just over 250 km to Blanchetown with stopping places at the various river towns and river banks along the way.

Since the 2023 major flood the river level has dropped considerably and watching our depths proved to be a constant activity for us all. There were many shallows and many of us touched keels and rudders on the way.

Our first evening at Berri was a welcome to the club for Martin and Denise's new cruiser "Taylor Louise". This comprised champagne, nibbles, speeches and a thorough inspection, up and down, of the new boat.

After passing through the first lock our first stop was at the aptly named Whirlpool Bend and because of the lower water level, most of us had trouble getting in close enough to the beach. Taylor Louise had to moor some hundreds of metres downstream. Beautiful weather though and we made the most of it with a swim, drifting with the current past the sterns of the boats.

Swimming was on the agenda again at Loxton with everyone entering the water from the stern of Taylor Louise and drifting quickly down the length of the moored boats on noodles or horseshoes to the last boat, Take It Easy. Heavy rain the next morning broke up a huge breakfast being held on the waterfront lawns by a national Rotary conference being held in Loxton.

The rain quickly cleared and we were off again for a very scenic but uneventful trip to Moorook. We passed the spot where on a previous trip Take It Easy had taken

a broken down fishing boat under tow and had been rewarded at the Moorook boat ramp with a gift of the occupant's whole catch of fish, gutted and cleaned for us too. There was no-one to rescue this time and no fish reward so we all had tea at the General Store where the owner, an Indian and his wife, cooked us some delicious Indian food. The Moorook waterfront has beautiful lawns, clearly well maintained and well watered. For an hour in the middle of the night the sprinklers turned on and gave not just the lawns a very good watering but all of our boats as well.

We departed early for the short trip to Kingston and once tied up to the bank were picked up by the local bus for the trip to nearby Banrock Station for lunch. The Banrock Station venue, service, attention to us and food was all excellent. We will certainly come again on our next cruise down this part of the Murray. By this time it was very hot – at least 30 degrees so we spent the rest of the afternoon swimming off the sterns of the boats.

We motored on to Overland Corner, passing through Lock 3 on the way and were very surprised on Silk Department when the lockmaster got us to use our own bow rope to secure us while the lock emptied. Luckily we quickly realised that as the water went down our rope would not be long enough. We had to do a very quick substitute just as the rail started to disappear above. Arriving at Overland Corner we all had difficulty getting close to the bank, fighting a strong river current and a strong southerly wind.

Silk Department lost a chair overboard but with Ron Attard's long boat hook and a lot of luck I just managed to hook it up. I had visions of the last Murray trip where I inadvertently left both chairs at Morgan and had to do the remainder of the trip sitting on the ground at every happy hour.

We walked the 700 metres across the floodplain to the old Overland Corner Hotel and had a lovely lunch in the hotel gardens. Joan was kept busy photographing and identifying some rare parrots enjoying the water sprinklers and Anne searched the little museum for some old items once owned by her great grandmother who lived in the area.

The beautiful grassy bank that we expected at Waikerie has seriously deteriorated as a result of the floods and nor is it helped by a lowering of the water level. This

meant that big solid sand bags that had once been an underwater protection for the river bank were now exposed and seriously threatening to boats like ours. With some manoeuvring we each found a good spot and then got down to the serious business of shopping, exploring op-shops and enjoying the local SA favourite – the kitchener bun.

What is it with these SA towns and their midnight lawn sprinklers. They got us all again!

We motored on the next day, passing through Lock 2 (with sufficient ropes provided for everyone) and immediately downstream a very shallow couple of kilometres with depths of less than a metre. From here on there were many quite shallow spots with our rudder kicking up several times.



After a night on a windy exposed beach just upstream from Cadell we motored on, passing through Morgan and the very high historic wharf. Suddenly we were in civilisation where the close proximity to Adelaide has allowed the Adelaide wealthy to build their holiday “shacks”. One that really caught our attention had a helicopter on the lawn in front. Interesting also to see the flood water marks around first floor level on many houses. It was here too that the wake boats and jet skis made their presence felt.

Our final night was spent squeezed in together on the little grassy bank in Donald Flat inlet or, better known

to Baysiders as Yellow Boat Inlet after member Gary Perkins who discovered it on one of our previous trips. Here too we had “Kenton’s Quiz” which was designed to see who had been most observant during the cruise. Winners were Sue and Geoffrey Harmer who were able to answer questions like “What were the trees that we sheltered under during happy hour at Kingston?” (Casurinas). It was here too that we farewelled Martin and Denise on Taylor Louise who were motoring further downstream to Mannum where they keep Taylor Louise.



The next morning in beautiful weather we motored the last 16 km to Blanchetown, tied up and waited for the bus to take us back to Renmark/Paringa to pick up cars and trailers. Retrieval and de-rigging took the rest of the afternoon and then we had a final cruise dinner at the very old Blanchetown Hotel. A last farewell as one by one we headed for home next morning.

HAPPY HOUR WITH RON and RUTH ATTARD

So how many interstate sailing trips do you think you have done with the club?

Ron: *Oh it would have to be at least 15 or 16. I think we have generally done one at least every second year, and sometimes every year. We have been members for 31 years.*

So which is the most memorable?

Pause....!

Ron: *I think it would be the Tasmanian trip when we went down the D'Encrestaux Channel.*

What was so memorable about that?

Ron: *It was all spectacular. Pristine waterway, white sand beaches, mostly flat water sailing. It was very well organised and we would do it again tomorrow.*

Wasn't that the cruise when Robyn Loh spent the whole day in bed?

Ron: *Yes but it was closer to two days! We had sailed down to the bottom of Bruny Island and it was just a short hop over to Research. There was a great little anchorage there and it is about as far south as you can get. But the short hop was across open water and part of the Southern Ocean. So when the storm came up the next day we weren't going anywhere. Or the day after. It was February and it snowed on the beach. When we eventually sailed back, we started off in a 4 metre swell.*

Tell us about the Queensland trips.

Ron: *Well Mike Lyles organised most of those. Mike had sailed most of these waters by himself or with Shirley years before. So he knew the waterways well and he understood the weather patterns. We always sailed from south to north because the prevailing winds are south easterly and can be quite strong. Perhaps up to 25 knots. By heading from south to north we were usually on a broad reach and the sailing was easy.*

How did the trips come about?

Ron: *It usually started with someone saying how they would really like to visit such and such a waterway. Then a couple of others would join in and the next thing you knew was you had half a dozen boats all planning to participate. We were all still working pretty much full time so it took quite a bit of organising. The road trips were as much part of the adventure as the sailing.*

I remember that you finished up in Port Douglas on one trip. Where did you start that one from?

Ron: *We put in just near Townsville. That was one of the longer trips; about 4 weeks altogether. Mike did most of the planning with hops from island to island and a safe anchorage every night. A couple of the legs were*

quite long and we had early starts to make sure we reached the safe anchorage before nightfall.

Was that one of the best Queensland trips?

Ruth: *I think the trip out to Percy Island was the best. It is such a Robinson Crusoe thing. There was a couple living out there manning the weather station and they loved having visitors. It is 47 km offshore so they don't get that many people dropping in. They cooked us a meal when we arrived and made us so welcome. I loved the remoteness, the coconuts all over the beach, and the carefree feel of the place.*

Ron: *Yes that was a great trip but for me it would have to be Great Keppel and Little Keppel island. That was one of the few Queensland trips where we retrieved and launched from the same place. Great Keppel island has fabulous white sand beaches with turquoise waters at all corners of the compass. And whales everywhere, include breaching next to the boat so they could presumably get a better look at us. We went for several walks along the beaches at Great Keppel and finished up swimming our way around rather walking along the beach; the water was so inviting.*

Have you any bad experiences on these trips?

Ron: *Oh there is always something not to write home about. I had a gearbox problem on the way up to the Whitsundays one time and the others went ahead while I sorted out the car. So I was about 4 days behind. When we got there, Ruth and I quickly rigged the boat and then sailed out to meet the rest of the fleet. But after a few hours it was getting dark and visibility wasn't good. Ruth said that the water was getting shallower and we weren't far from going aground when I heaved too and checked the charts. I had no idea where we were. I couldn't reach anybody on the radio, until finally the coast guard came on line and managed to get the others through the emergency channel. To cut a long story short, we had sailed into Repulse Bay near McKay and weren't very far away from being surrounded by the mangroves. I was completely disorientated and had sailed 180 degrees in the wrong direction. I copped a lot of flack for that one.*

Ruth: *There was also the first time Ron took me with him up there and we were sailing back into Corio Bay with a big sea and a following swell. I thought it was great – quite exhilarating with the surf breaking over*

the back of the boat. But then I saw Ron's face and he explained that the motor going under with each successive wave wasn't actually all that good for keeping the motor going. And without it we would find it difficult to get into the harbour. So I put the camera away and started to wonder why I was here.

So Ron and Ruth. What's next?

Ron: *I have to do some work on the trailer so that it is fully reliable. There will be another trip soon and we want to be ready for it.*

WHEN MILES OFFSHORE FROM THE QUEENSLAND COAST

By Ruth Attard

We were moored at a place called Yellowpatch which is quite a few miles offshore on Curtis island south of Yeppoon. It was a lovely day with a light breeze and we decided to go to the lighthouse which as on a small promontory at the southern end of the bay.

We set off at about 1.00 pm in our rubber dinghies and headed for the lighthouse promontory. On arrival we left the rubber dinghies at the beach and then headed off to the lighthouse on foot. It was quite a walk. By the time we got back to the dinghies it was obvious that we weren't going anywhere. The wind had increased substantially and the bay was in turmoil. We decided to wait it out.

So we waited.

And we waited.

It got later and later.

It was very hot and none of us had really thought to bring any provisions. No water and nothing to eat.

And we were now sensing that the wind wasn't going to ease before nightfall. We were thirsty, tired, hungry and little bit cross with ourselves.

Hours and hours later another family who had also moored at Yellowpatch had seen us depart and sensed our predicament. They turned up in a motorboat just before dusk and rescued us. We left the rubber

dinghies on the beach and retrieved them the next day. Phew!!!

Upon return to our boats we were a group of hungry, tired and somewhat embarrassed mariners.

THE PASSAGE FROM FIJI TO NEW ZEALAND

By Julia Caploiu

What does a fellow BTYC Member do when suddenly faced with an abundance of time?

One morning I woke up at home, created an online profile on findacrew.net and the next thing I knew, I was being asked to video chat with a couple who were currently in Fiji! Within a day I had booked a one-way flight, and went to join them on their sailing vessel. Imagine - a Bruce Roberts 56ft ketch. Joining us would be another adventurous Canadian man, and so we were going to be a crew of four.



After having spent some time at the Fijian Customs in the morning to get departure stamps in our respective passports, we finally set off just after 10am on Friday 6th Oct 2023 for mainland New Zealand. All was going well in navigating the many reefs out of the bays in Fiji, until suddenly skipper Andrew spotted a long way off a lone tinny with Fijians waving frantically. They were already well out of the final reef area and into the open waters, and their little engine had died and swells were

increasing. The two other large Catamarans whom we'd spoken to in line at Customs in the morning were breezing ahead of us, blissfully unaware of what was happening portside. And since we had already cleared Customs, we were not permitted to touch them or tow them, and so we did giant circles around them as they continued to drift without a motor, as we tried to make radio contact with Fijian authorities.

After what seemed like an eternity, the radio contact said a navy vessel would be sent to collect them and we must remain there until they do. Suddenly another tinny with a working engine and another bunch of Fijians arrived bouncing erratically over the waves (it was becoming like a scene out of a comedy!) At this point I made a comment to our crew of four that this stuff must happen out here all the time, because as we watched in bewilderment, several Fijians clambered into the second tinny, and they tied a rope from the functioning tinny, and proceeded to start dragging the tinny with the defunct engine away. All the Fijians were fist-pumping with happiness and blowing us kisses and saying thank-you, while we started to chuckle as it was quite a sight! We radioed back the coast guard and told them to call off the navy vessel, as the Fijians had sorted themselves out afterall! Clever fellows.

And with that, we proceeded on our set route, with Canadian Austin remarking "well, let's all hope that's a good omen for the beginning of our journey!", and me stating "no need to go to church this Sunday, we've done our good deed for the week!"

We were all in super good spirits, all happy-go-lucky, till 6hrs later when it became my shift at the helm.... and that's when all hell broke loose. How fitting! I had done 1.5hrs of my 2hr watch, dealing with WD 60, the occasional port and subsequent large waves at a whopping 7.5 knots. I should have known better about what was to soon be happening to my little frame of 155cm. It had started like that one time I went whale watching with the Warneet Motor Yacht Club (WMYC) from Stony Point... with a few little yawns, and a few tiny burps... and then I said "do we have a bucket? Pass me THAT container. NOW!" And so began the duet, featuring myself and Austin singing very much out of sync, but to the same tune.... barf, barf, barfff! Shame about that beautiful salad lunch I'd had, though I

couldn't help but notice how pretty the red cabbage, corn and capsicum looked when it came up again!

It was that wretched bashing against waves and incessant giant swells that was wreaking havoc with our bodies, despite us taking seasickness pills religiously before the start of voyage and during!

After that first watch session attempt, I lay down, and the night proceeded with both Austin and myself trying to do our night watches individually with Skipper onhand, but we still continued barfing into our own container. This continued for a whopping four days out in the open ocean. which was only the first days of the passage, mind you....

I didn't eat much the entire 9-days except two bananas and a bit of plain pasta one day and the occasional dry cracker, two slices of bread, supplemented by 9 protein bars all up - and this across the 9-day passage, mind you! In the first horrid 4 days, I spent my time between watch shifts quivering and sleeping on the floor and skipped many shifts myself due to illness, and slept in the middle of the saloon so as to be closest to the boat centre. I even started having weird-ass dreams about people and things I haven't thought about in years..... Silver lining to the story of barfing (because there always is a silver lining in life), at least I'd be coming back to Melbourne with a svelte figure from losing all that weight!

Then suddenly on day 5 of the passage, I managed to get up off the floor and go to the bathroom for the first time! (Note: weather and wind had changed and died down dramatically to the point that we began motoring for the remaining days of passage), and suddenly I became my chirpy self! I cleaned myself up, brushed my teeth, ate another amazing Fijian banana (side note: the bananas we get in Australia taste nothing like the ones from Fiji, their fruit is phenomenal!) And made myself be known in the cockpit for once outside my required watch session, "Julia is resurrected!" proclaimed Skipper Andrew, and he took a picture of me to prove I wasn't dead, yet!

All in all, I'm glad we got the barfing over and done with in the first 4 days, and I am proud of my persistence. I was crossing the Pacific Ocean - how many people do you know that have done that?! And at one stage I was standing there at the helm, with only my yellow bikini on as it was so bloody hot still even in the dark of night,

with right-hand wrapped around my barfing container, and left-hand holding on - I must have been a sight! Wish someone had been awake to take a picture of me! Such great memories!

So after day 5 onwards I was feeling even better than ever, and managing to do all my night watches without konking out and having someone else take over. I even got the 4am watch shift at one point and thought "omg I may never get to see an ocean sunrise like this alone, at the helm of a yacht again" - how spectacular is the ocean! The water really is a deeper blue out here! And the horizon is so peculiar. And the sunsets are an absolute treat! Nothing in the movies or in any photograph can truly capture the beauty of nature out on the wide, endless, open ocean. We've had flying fish skip out of the water and whither and remain on the deck, a large albatross and other birds fly by (how on earth do they make it so far out to sea?! Their poor, tired wings!) We saw dolphins in the distance, but fortunately or unfortunately no sharks. We also managed to snag a large tuna, but despite the Skipper's 15-minute ordeal in trying to tire out the fish and although the boat was taken out of motion, the fish still managed to unhook itself and get away, it was still entertaining battle nonetheless!



Under skipper Andrew's instructions at night, I learnt about developing squalls on the radar, and diligently added the coordinates and various information to the logbook after watches. We discussed at length wind patterns and the boat rigging and electronics, and I asked him 101 questions about anything and everything from sailing to life in general, and he answered them all so kindly and thoughtfully. He is really a great man, and exceptionally knowledgeable and talented with his hands and tools. One night watch I remarked to him that I'd been hearing an eerie old-

style telephone ringing in the distance, and he wryly asked "what else have you heard?" Apparently it's "a thing" to be hearing voices of the dead out at sea, including in the saloon on sailing vessel Imagine! Unfortunately I never experienced this, as I'd have loved to have told these voices where to go...

We had fresh loaves of bread baking away in the Panasonic breadmaker and even though I wasn't eating much, it still was splendid! One morning we all enjoyed a cuppa together in the cockpit as a team. I announced that I am looking forward to a big pint of beer in Bay of Islands after we cleared New Zealand Customs in Opuia and that I would be treating myself to a day at a hotel before my flight from Auckland to Melbourne.

We arrived at Opuia, NZ in absolute darkness at approximately 04:00 on Sunday 15th Oct with our Q-Flag raised, and safely found our way to the quarantine docks. After some struggling with lasso-style attempts to get the dock lines onto cleats (you're not allowed off the vessel, not even onto the dock to tie up!), we proceeded to vacuum and tidy up the entire boat as we were awaiting the arrival of Customs Officers at any time (they turned up about 6 hours later...) All went well, and only the frozen meats and mayonnaise was confiscated - we got to keep the booze and nuts and other snacks. The Customs Officers even remarked that the boat was very clean and tidy considering the voyage duration.

After so many days of having the wind directly on the nose, on our final day of passage we were treated with optimal sailing conditions with swells <1m, constant winds in high-teens on a beam reach, making for fantastic sailing with a variety of the Mizzen, Main Sail, Stay Sail and Jib. We had constant speeds of 7.5kts which was an absolute delight after so many days of otherwise motor-sailing.

The 9-day passage from Fiji to New Zealand was a welcomed period of timeout and a fantastic opportunity overall. I think it's safe to say that the ocean crossing hasn't broken me - it's just made me more determined in knowing what I want!

Notice

40th Anniversary Lunch

Sunday 15th September 2024

Save the Date

Bayside Trailable Yacht Club 40th Anniversary Barbecue Lunch

To be held at

Hastings Yacht Club

1 Marine Parade, Hastings

On Sunday 15th September 2024

At 12.00pm. More details to come in due course.

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